24

THE TRUE CHURCHMAN.

AN ADDRESS

OF THE

RT. REV. WILLIAM MEADE,

TO THE CONVENTION

OF THE

PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF VA.

Assembled in Staunton, May 21st. 1851.

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ADDRESS.

My Dear Brethren,

In looking forward to this meeting, my thoughts have very naturally turned to some method whereby I might contribute to its usefulness. A word in season is good. To know what that word should be, passing events must be noticed, and a lesson sought from them. We live in an age of high religious excitement. Our own beloved church partakes largely of it. What the meaning of God's Word is on important points of doctrine and order, and what the sense of our articles, offices, and other standards, are topics earnestly discussed. As might be expected, each party adduces scripture for its justification in "contending earnestly for the faith," expressing a strong confidence that it holds the faith as "once delivered to the saints." Equally confident is its language as to the doctrine of the church. Not only the correctness of the opposite party in its judgment of the church's doctrine, but the sincerity of its attachment to the church itself is often called in question. To this evil habit there has ever been a strong propensity in human nature wherever a difference of opinion exists on important questions whether of church or state, and the law of love

has been often greatly violated. Zeal, whether for our church or country, often becomes an ungodly and uncharitable thing. One has called it "the curst ungodliness of zeal." We would not, however, be guilty of violating the law of love in another way, viz: by condemning as utterly void of piety and patriotism all those who are even violent and denunciatory towards those whom they regard as in great error. We would not be fierce even for moderation, lest we fall into the same condemnation. There is what has been called "an extreme middle," which is also to be avoided. To condemn all as wrong who are arrayed against each other in a warm contest on some important point, is a very easy and convenient way of deciding controversy; one which requires little study, and oftentimes has little of charity in it. To judge righteous judgment is what God requires, and as zeal without knowledge is not likely to do this, so neither is indifference to the distinctions between truth and error; for religion is that thing above all others about which we are not allowed to be lukewarm.

Without further preface, let me state to my brethren the subject of this address. It will be the consideration of a delicate question, sometimes not very kindly handled, viz: "What constitutes true churchmanship, or who is that true churchman, that sincere and zealous friend and member of the church, who must not be charged with unfaithfulness or false-heartedness." In the discussion of it, I shall make no invidious comparisons, indulge in no denunciations, but address myself honestly to the task, by such lights and authorities, as the Word of God, faithful history, and the standards of the church may furnish.

First. In endeavoring to shew wherein true churchmanship consists, and of course who the true churchman is, we should inquire into the origin and meaning of the terms. Though allowable when rightly used, yet are they not to be found in scripture, and for the most part have been unhappily and unkindly used. The word church, however, from which they are drawn is often used by the sacred writers, and there are also expressions in the scriptures setting forth what these terms intend to declare, viz: great zeal for the church of God, a true lover and faithful servant of the church. The word church, from whence they are derived, has a general as well as limited meaning. In its general sense it denotes all God's people, and whatever pertains to his kingdom. The true churchman, in regard to this sense of the term, is one who is zealous for all things appertaining

to Christ's kingdom on earth, loves the whole church of God—the blessed company of God's faithful people—and shows his churchmanship by what he does for it and them. But there is a peculiar and restricted sense in which the word church is used, and from it, in that restricted sense, the terms churchman and churchmanship, as commonly used, are drawn. We read not only of the church of God—the church of Christ—but the church of Corinth, of Ephesus, &c. In all history we read in like manner of churches in the various countries of christendom. After a time when a great division took place we read of the Eastern and Western church, and at a still later period, of the Roman Catholic church, and of those who protested against its dominion and corruption. Among the latter we may reckon the Protestant Episcopal churches of England and America, the latter being derived from the former, and adopting her doctrine, worship, and polity, making only such changes as the differences of civil government required. The title of churchman, was at an early period of her history given to a member of the established church of England, and the distinctive appellations of high and low churchman were added to designate certain views entertained as to her scriptural claims, or her authority as the established church, or as to both.

In determining what true churchmanship is, we of America must leave out of view all that is peculiar to our mother church as an establishment, and any things in her which may have been altered after our Revolution. We may be allowed and indeed are bound to have reference to the history of the reformation in England, the changes made in the prayer book, and the writings of the reformers, for all these are genuine evidences of the mind of those who shaped our articles and prayers.

But beside these we have a very simple method of trying the true churchman in those documents to which almost all declare that they appeal, as containing their views of doctrine and churchmanship, namely, our articles, liturgy, and homilies, as we now have them, for though the two former have been subjected to several revisions, they are substantially the same, as when first established. There are, it is true, those who seem disposed to erect another test or standard of orthodox churchmanship, almost elevating it to a level with that which is divine. They make, not the Reformation and the fathers of our Protestant church, the judge and pattern, but the church at some early period and the writings of ancient fathers. They prefer to be called catholic church-

men or Catholics, thus inventing another name not found in scripture, and using it even more improperly than the other; but as so many of them have of late years chosen to enlarge their title yet more and become Roman Catholics, and as with such exceptions, churchmen declare themselves willing to be tried by our acknowledged standards, we shall pass by these unhappy deserters, and proceed to the application of the admitted test to all others.

In the prayer book and homilies then we have the church's doctrine, worship, polity, discipline, and her bearing towards all other churches. Let us try the churchman by these, and in the order just mentioned.

1st. Who is the true churchman as to doctrine? Since God has chosen to save men by the foolishness of preaching and to sanctify souls by the truth, we may well give this the precedence. The true churchman, if a minister, while according to his ordination vows, he will carry every thing to the bible, making the law and testimony of God the rule of his faith and the substance of his preaching, will also have a conscientious regard to his subscription to the creeds which were completed at different periods, as they were called for, and to the articles, those more enlarged creeds, which were either drawn up, or confirmed after due examination, by men as competent, and we believe as much under the guidance of God's spirit, as those who executed the former—though from their length and the variety of subjects embraced in them, the latter are more likely to be misunderstood and even to be in error. They were not merely drawn up in the first place by a few men of learning and piety, but have during the last three hundred years been subjected to re-examination by bishops and other ministers and laymen, and been used and approved by millions of God's people in the Episcopal church in England and America and elsewhere, and highly approved by other millions, not of our communion. But little variety of opinion can be entertained as to the meaning of those great fundamental doctrines which are the life and soul of them. If the same cannot be said of a few words and phrases in some of the offices, yet their general meaning is evidently in strict accordance with the articles. As the latter were evidently designed to be, to a certain extent, expositions of the former, and set forth for the express purpose of determining controversies, the true churchman will see in all of them not yea, nay,—that is different doctrines and palpable contradictions—but the same mind of the same persons, (for they were the work of the same

persons,) and will therefore honestly esteem both, even though he might desire to see more clearness in some passages, for the sake of concord. The true churchman will delight to see sonnd doctrine so well guarded, not merely by brief creeds, but by more specific articles, devotional offices and prayers. He will bless God that by such means greater unity is produced among her members, than by all the infallible decrees of Rome, and that in some good degree false doctrines are kept out of our pale. He is not, however, required in the face of all history to affirm that these or any other articles or prayers can prevent all heresy, but that they are admirably formed for this purpose, as numbers not of our communion candidly acknowledge. He will not regard them as inspired, as some have done their symbolical books; he will not esteem them either as equal to scripture, or as unerring interpreters of scripture, but will love them as in his opinion superior to any human composition either ancient or modern, as containing much of the very best which has come down to us from primitive times, as being the result of great piety, much learning, undaunted firmness, most laborious study, and as being worthy of most devout gratitude to that God, who though he does not now inspire with unerring wisdom as at the first, the expounders of scripture, does still fulfil his promise of being with his church to the end of the world, to preserve the sacred deposit of truth which was granted to it. Thus far and no farther can the true protestant Episcopal churchman go, without going beyond our reforming fathers in England and the reviewers of their works in this country. I need not add that the great doctrines which he will see in the prayer book, as the centre around which all others revolve, and which keep all others in their proper place, are those of the holy trinity, the atonement, the deep depravity of human nature, renewal by the Holy Spirit, justification by faith, and the sacraments as means of grace to those who use them faithfully. These must be received into an honest heart as the great doctrines of the church, else, all other zeal in its behalf will not constitute us true churchmen. The reformers would have repudiated all such as mere formalists, placing them with those who cried "the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord are we," while the Lord of the temple was not in them by his spirit and his word.

2ndly. Let us see who is the true churchman as to the next point, viz: the worship of the church. That it is a most important and influential part of the provision made in the.

prayer book for the promotion of our salvation, must be acknowledged, from the fact that in all ages so much care has been taken to make it as perfect as possible. God's ancient people had their prayers for the temple and the snyagogue, some of which have come down to us, and may be read at this day. Our Lord and his disciples often joined in their use. Others were added from time to time more suited to christian worship. One given to us by our Lord himself, was incorporated into every office and liturgy of the primitive church and contains the substance of all other prayers into which it was amplified. With such high authorities, who can question the advantage of a public liturgy, and among the various liturgies which have been adopted from the earliest ages to the present time, who but must give the highest place to our own? With the word of God, the experience of so many ages, and all the liturgies of by gone days before them as their guides, how could such holy, learned and faithful men otherwise than succeed in producing a book which for three hundred years has appeared so excellent that but little alteration has been called for. Is it weakness or superstition, or mere sectarianism, to rejoice in it, to make our boast of it, to bless God for it, and to regard it as a glorious inheritance bequeathed to us by our forefathers from which we will never part? What individual or number of individuals, however holy and wise, if set down to prepare a liturgy without making use of the helps and materials of past ages could have furnished one which may compare with it. In proof of which let the prayer for public worship drawn up by that most holy and most talented man Richard Baxter, and offered as a substitute for the English liturgy be examined. Nothing could more effectually have established the superiority of our service, than the proposition to supercede it by that well meant effort, but most utter failure of Mr. Baxter. When we consider also the efficacy of a liturgy for the use of ministers and people, in moulding the minds, establishing the principles, and directing the feelings of the worshippers, how can we sufficiently rejoice in having one of so holy, heart stirring and sublime a character as our own. If it be true which has been said of the ballads of a country, that they have more power to form the character of the citizens, than the statutes of the land, how much more true must it be of the prayers which are continually used, by comparison with any other provisions of the church. And who can but admire the spirit of our prayer? What book on earth save the bible is so full of

Christ as the prayer book? Every petition is put up either to him, or through him: we fear to proceed more than a few short sentences in prayer, without stopping and calling on Christ to take our requests and plead for them with the Father. And need I speak of the spirit of adoption, the spirit of praise, of deep humility, of hungering and thirsting after righteousness, of earnest longing for more grace which breathes throughout them? How can such poor creatures who need so many helps to prayer otherwise than rejoice in such helps? He that calls himself a churchman and delights not in her prayers has taken a misnomer to himself.

And yet, while the true churchman must love the church's prayers, he is not required to deny that there may be and are other prayers, either extempore or composed, which are most acceptable to God, when the heart goes with them. He may delight to think that so many thousands of petitions public and private, uttered in other words, are most prevailing with heaven. He well knows that there were occasions when holy men of scripture, prophets, apostles, and our Lord himself, while generally uniting in established forms, must have used others—some of which indeed are interspersed through the bible. He knows that our forefathers engaged in no warfare against other prayers, whether extempore or composed, but besides expressly sanctioning such, by rubric, in pastoral visits to the sick, used brief ones in the pulpit before and after sermons; specimens of which we have in connection with some of our homilies and with many of the sermons of the old divines. Nor has it ever been attempted either in England or America to forbid what some practice even to this day. Nor has such practice ever led to the thought of superseding the liturgy of the church by any other prayers. And if such liberty has been ever allowed in the pulpit and before the great congregation, how much more on those occasions when the minister meets with a few of his people for prayer and exhortation in a less public way, especially when even then he shews his love of the church's prayers by using a portion of the same.

3dly. Let us now enquire what the true churchman holds as to the ministry and government of Christ's church.

To him one thing seems to be clear, viz: that the church of God under each of its two great dispensations, has had divers orders of ministers in it. In the Jewish church, beyond dispute, there were the high priest, priest, and levite. In the christian, we are expressly told, that Christ "gave to his church," and that God "hath set in his church," ministers

of different orders, and for different purposes, as apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers. Although some of these were of short duration and for special purposes, yet the principle of divers orders and of subordination seems to be clearly established. As to the number and precise office of those which were continued, there has been diversity of sentiment. At the time of the Reformation, the Pope, with his chief devotees, maintained that there were only two of divine appointment, viz: priests and deacons, and that the Pope gave to the bishops their pre-eminence over the presbyters. Some protestants maintained that there was only one order of the ministry, though there were other officers to be helpers of the same. The wisdom and moderation of our church on this subject is worthy of all praise. In her articles she affirms nothing positively or dogmatically concerning it, although so clear and strong on the great points of doctrine. She only declares the necessity of a lawful call to the ministry in opposition to self-constituted teachers. But in the preface to her ordination services, she exhibits the perfection of prudence, honesty and charity, in stating the grounds of her own decision and action. She there affirms her undoubting belief that from the apostles' times, that is, even during their days, and ever since, there were and have been these orders, viz: bishops, priests and deacons—that while the apostles themselves were exercising their high and peculiar gifts, there were these orders. In the services themselves, she speaks of God, as, by his spirit and divine providence appointing divers orders; not that Christ himself expressly appointed them with his own lips, as he did the sacraments, ordaining the apostles to be of the first order, and all bishops to be full and regular successors to them in office. On this disputed ground she did not venture. As to the precise amount of the apostolic power granted to them she says nothing. That they were successors to the apostles in some things, as inferior ministers were in other things, she doubtless held, although the only occasion on which the term apostolic succession is used is in an office (the institution of ministers) where it must comprehend all orders of the ministry and refers to their descent from the apostles, not to the powers possessed by them. She must have been well aware that as prophets and evangilists had ceased to be used in the church, and as deacons had been created by the apostles, the Holy Ghost moving them thereto, so there were those who believed that the apostolic office ceased with the first apostles, and that bishops.

as a new order, were appointed to govern the church, and therefore may she have avoided the introduction of that disputed point.*

* It may be thought by some that as for the most part the advocates of the apostolic succession, understood in its fullest sense, admit that some of the gifts of the apostles, as inspiration and miracles, ceased with them, and only the ordinary powers of government and ordination were continued to the bishops as their successors, and as the opponents also admit that although like the office of deacon, the episcopal office was a new one, established by the apostles under the direction of the Holy Ghost, yet it did succeed to some of the powers of the apostolic office, therefore the dispute is rather one of words or names, and not of much importance.

The opponents, however, think otherwise, and say that as the overgrown power of the Pope resulted from the doctrine of his succession to the alleged supremacy of Peter, so if each bishop is to be regarded as a regular successor to the apostles, who had those great and undefined powers which were necessary to the first establishment of christianity, it may lead to a claim of much greater powers and privileges on their part than can consist with the rights of others and the welfare of the church. This apprehension has been increased of late years by the high claims of tractarians in behalf of bishops, who are declared by them to be the full successors to all the power, and channels of all the grace deposited in the apostles for the establishment and future government and sanctification of the church. They also say that the church has not only opposed this doctrine, by subjecting bishops to laws made not by themselves only, but conjointly by other clergymen and laymen, thus restricting their power, as was not the case with the apostles, but has carefully refrained from any language identifying the episcopal with the apostolic office. A reference to the consecration service and other parts of the prayer book will shew that they are correct in the affirmation of a careful avoidance of any expressions identifying the two offices. The bishops are indeed represented as doing some things after the example of the apostles—as in confirmation—and reference is had to the apostles in the consecration service; yet are the bishops not declared to be of their order, not identified with them, as deacons and priests are with those who were first ordained to those orders. Let any one examine the various places, where, if this doctrine were certainly held by the church, and intended to be taught, it would have been most easy, natural and proper to introduce it, and yet see how it is avoided, and he must conclude that it is only a matter of private inference on the part of those who hold it, from insufficient data. It may have been one of those doubtful points about which she chose to be silent, knowing that there was diversity of sentiment. If the learned Dr. Barrows' testimony is of weight on this subject, the fathers themselves did not identify the two offices, as some have inferred from their language. See his able treatise on the Pope's supremacy. If the author is not mistaken, the writings of the reformers furnish abundant

And now if it be, or if we believe it to be, that God has not only thus shewed his preference to a three-fold ministry

evidence that some of them made the same distinction. That scripture which is most relied on for the identification of the two, is the promise of our Lord of being with the apostles to the end of the world. His presence with their successors in perpetuating the apostolic office and ordaining other ministers is supposed to be the true meaning of that promise. Such does not seem to be sustained by the churches' teaching. In the homily on the Holy Ghost this promise is regarded as given to the whole church for the preservation of the faith. In the 98th hymn and in the institution office it is applied to all the ministers of the gospel, no intimation being given that it was chiefly for the successors of the apostles in perpetuating their offices. The 99th hymn is a kind of paraphrase of that passage in Ephesians which speaks of the appointment of divers orders in the ministry, viz: apostles, prophets, evangalists, pastors and teachers.

After speaking of the two former as having been at the first, it represents the two last as still continuing.

"In lower forms to bless our eyes,
Pastors from hence and teachers rise,
Who though with feebler rays they shine,
Still mark a long extended line.
So shall the bright succession run,
Through all the courses of the sun,
While unborn churches by their care,
Shall rise and flourish large and fair."

Our present bishops of course must come under the denomination of pastors, who are carrying on the work begun by apostles, prophets and evangelists, which is not only the opinion of some judicious commentators, but seems to be supported by the consecration service, where we find the term pastor emphatically applied to bishops. In that service, when if ever the church would identify the apostolic and episcopal office, we find that the title of apostle is never given to the bishop, nor the term apostleship ever used. The terms used are bishop and pastor. The work of a bishop—the office to which you are called—this administration, etc. Reference is made to the apostles in the service, and lessons from scripture are used which relate to them, and most properly too, for the bishop's office and work come nearest to that of the apostles, and follow after it, but as Dr. Barrow remarks, a dictator may appoint some one to succeed him in government, but not in the same office of dictator.

From what has been said, we may surely infer that the church does not require to be believed, as essential to a true attachment to herself, what she has carefully avoided to inculcate in her standards.

If we sincerely receive what she plainly teaches as to the episcopal office, and those who fill it according to its requirements, and all men esteem them for their office as well as the work sake, we shall reap abundant benefits therefrom.

among the Jews, but by his spirit and providence led the apostles to ordain bishops, presbyters and deacons as officers in the church, what need we more to decide our choice most positively, and make us adhere to it most unwaveringly. Can we consent to place on the mere ground of human expediency, or on account of the supposed advantages of episcopacy, that, for which we think we can produce such an exhibition of God's will. Seeing that human nature, whether as to civil or religious concerns, is so much the same in every age, and that in every age subordination, divers orders and officers both in church and state are required, can we think that this was an intimation of the divine will only for a certain generation, and that other generations might at pleasure exchange it for one which seemed to be more suitable to themselves. A true churchman cannot do this. He will love and respect that system which he believes to be God's will for the government of his household the church, too much to admit of any departure, not justified by great necessity. But is it needful to go yet further in our belief of the divine appointment of such a ministry, and say of it, as of the holy sacraments, that it is appointed by Christ himself, or as of the holy law, that God spake these words and said, and that it can admit of no change whatever, without destruction to the whole, and that no diversity of opinion on the subject can be admitted? Is it necessary to true churchmanship, to a sincere and hearty approval of our ecclesiastical organization, and a zealous promotion of it, that we affirm there can be no other ministry whose labors are accepted and blessed of heaven, no other church than that which has such a ministry? Then must we cease to claim fellowship on this point with our Anglican forefathers, must forget all the past history of our mother church, strike from the list of true churchmen her Cranmers, and Jewells and Hookers, and a long line of her best bishops and other ministers who held no such opinion, but declared the very contrary.

The well known sentiments also of such fathers of the American church as White and Wharton and Smith, the chief reviewers of our prayer book, must be repudiated, and the language of its preface and other parts be entirely changed. If any think that they see a more exclusive doctrine in God's Word, or in ancient tradition, they can only claim the privilege of holding it as a private opinion. To treat it, and require others to hold it, as the doctrine of the church, in spite of all her history, and to denounce those as false-hearted

and unsound who do not, is itself, not only a violation of christian charity, but as we conceive, of true protestant churchmanship, since nothing can be clearer than that our reformers in England, and our fathers in America, who impressed their views on the articles, offices and other parts of the prayer book, as well as set them forth in other ways, only held that our Episcopal regimen was essential to the perfection, and not to the existence of a church. And need we add that when perfection is required as a true note or mark of a church of Christ, then will there cease to be one upon earth.

Fourthly. Having considered what true churchmanship is in regard to order and polity, let us see what are its views as to the discipline of the church.

Godly discipline has ever been regarded as one of the notes or marks of a true church. Our protestant forefathers charged the church of Rome with being greatly wanting in this, and scarce deserving the name of church by reason of such want. Discipline relates to the laws of any society, and the penalties of disobedience. All institutions must have laws for the good government thereof. Christ's kingdom has its laws and penalties. Many of them were expressly appointed by Christ himself. Others in conformity with the same have from time to time been put forth by the church. No true churchman can otherwise than acknowledge the obligation of obedience to such as are lawfully enacted. To obey the powers ordained of God, whether civil or ecclesiastical, when exercised according to his revealed will, is a most bounden duty. The ministers of our church at the time of their ordination promise faithful obedience to those who are placed over them, and who exercise their authority according to prescribed rules or canons. A due respect also is required to their godly admonitions and judgments. This obedience and respect is to be shewn not merely to those with whom we may agree in sentiment, or sympathize in theological views, but conscientiously, as to the Lord, and it may be done without any improper sacrifice of christian liberty or right of private judgment.

As to all the rules and regulations of the church called canons, rubrics, or by any other name, whether the observance be specially required by rulers or not, the true churchman will hold himself bound to do it. He will not select certain of them, such as he most approves, or most accord with his doctrines, and scrupulously observe these, making such observance a test of churchmanship, and denouncing those

who do not, but he will do with them as with the laws of God, resolve to obey them all, out of respect to the authority enjoining them. And yet as even the laws of God differ in importance, and may some of them be omitted or disobeyed under peculiar circumstances; since God himself preferring mercy to sacrifice, allows even his holy sabbath to be violated as to its letter, and sacrifices and offerings to be withheld; so a wise discretion has ever been conceded to God's ministers in the observance of inferior rules, or in regard to things become obsolete, having due reference to times, places and circumstances. Wherever such discretion has not been allowed or exercised, the result has been that men have strained at the gnat and swallowed the camel, have tithed mint, anise, and cummin, and neglected the weightier matters of the law. It should always be remembered that as the sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath, so rubrics and canons were made for the church, and not the church for them. In the course of a ministry of more than forty years, during which I have mingled much with brethren of all orders of the ministry, and all shades of opinion, and of course had much opportunity of observation on this subject, I have often discerned the propensity in persons of different views and habits and latitudes to select their own favorite rubrics and customs for strict observance, and pass others by as of little importance, while severely condemning those who did not think and act with themselves. As to that part of discipline which consists in the enforcement of penalties whether on the clergy or laity, it is proper to say something. The true churchman zealous for the honour, anxious for the purity of the church, remembering that judgment will begin at the house of God, and what charges are given on the subject in the sacred writings, will not be loose and negligent as to godly discipline. If the primitive church in some respects may have gone to an extreme in its use, the church of England ever since the Reformation has mourned over the want of it and prayed its restoration. Although too many of friends and foes in England and America have seemed to consider it a prominent feature in the church to leave all but the most extreme offenders to God and their own conscience, such was not the opinion and design of the reformers, however hindered they may have been in the execution thereof. They drew their estimate of evil living, both in the clergy and laity, from the early church, and renewed some of the canons of the same. They understood the works of the devil, the lusts of the flesh, the pomps and

vanities of the world, as renounced in the baptismal vows, which vows were copied from the primitive liturgies, as they were understood in primitive times, that is, as being all manner of sins, whether of the flesh or spirit, all the vain and sinful amusements of the world, in which some professing christians have ever delighted. Instead of the true churchman, therefore, leaving it to puritans and those of other denominations to condemn and oppose these things, and exercise discipline thereon, if he follows the reformers, as they followed the apostles and fathers, and is true to the spirit and design of our baptismal vows, rubrics and canons, none will be more decided in his condemnation of all evil living, and when either clergy or laity of whatever order or rank shall transgress, and bring reproach on the church, will be ready to sustain and enforce all godly discipline.

Lastly. Let us inquire into the feelings and conduct of the true churchman toward all who call themselves by the name of Christ. This has become a most delicate and important question by reason of the numerous divisions of christendom, and the differences existing between the churches thereof. To say nothing of those before the Reformation, at that time large numbers, in connection with, and in subjection to the church of Rome, renounced her unscriptural authority, her false doctrines, and corrupt worship. They who thus renounced her, were divided into separate churches themselves, according to the different countries in which they lived, various circumstances contributing to modify their forms of church polity and public worship. In one thing, however, they have all agreed, viz: in refusing communion with the church of Rome on account of her many abominations. The church of Rome, on the other hand, has never ceased to anathematise them and their descendants as schismatics and hereties who have no part or lot in the church of God. She also continues the same to this day in doctrine, worship and manners; and if protestants continue the same, there can be no communion as churches, or as individuals in religious ordinances, whatever may be the charities of social life. The consistent protestant churchman who holds the Reformation in esteem, understands and appreciates the differences between us and Rome, must perceive, that while she continues unchanged, any approximation on our part must be a departure from the principles of the Reformation and fraught with danger. Our mother church for a long time publicly prayed against the wiles and artifices of Rome, and although we wish not that prayer

restored, if we do not watch and pray continually, and adopt all proper means of defence, we shall suffer from that foe, whether going about as a roaring lion, or in the garb of an angel of light.

As to the intercourse of protestants and protestant churches, one with another, it has varied according to times and circumstances. Some have refused intercommunion when it was believed that there had been such a departure from the faith, as set forth in the bible and the confessions adopted at the Reformation, as would justify such a refusal. I need not say that our forefathers of the Reformation held most friendly communion with the ministers and members of those continental churches with which they agreed so well in doctrine. They differed from them as to church polity and worship, but did not consider this as a bar to such friendship and co-operation as they could not conscientiously have with Rome. They could and did unite with them in the publication and circulation of that bible whose use Rome forbids. They could and did unite in writing, circulating, and using tracts, catechisms, and books which were called for by the times in which they lived.

In the progress of events, and when secession, on what she regarded insufficient grounds, began to take place from the bosom of the English church, it was not to be expected that this same sympathy and joint action should continue in all things, either as to kind or degree. But still even dissenters from the church of England were never regarded as the corrupt followers of Rome. They were never denounced as the great anti-Christ of scripture. On the contrary, whereas upon more than one occasion when Rome was seeking to regain her lost influence and authority, we find all protestants uniting as against a common foe, we never hear of English churchmen invoking the aid of Rome to put down protestant dissent within the realm.

What then is the proper course to be pursued by a true and consistent churchman, whether Anglican, or American, who desires to be regulated by the principles and practices of our forefathers? Will he seek to find some road just equidistant between the church of Rome and the non-Episcopal churches of the Reformation, or, as is sometimes said, between Rome and Geneva? Such surely is not the road once travelled by our forefathers, and deeply stained with the blood of the martyrs of the English church. Such surely is not the road marked out in our prayer book and homilies. What if it be granted that our church has retained some few things

which others laid aside, and thus may be said to stand between Rome and Geneva; let it be remembered that one may stand between two points, or travel between two roads, and yet be very near to the one, while a great way off from the other. A churchman might in some things go between the two and yet be very far from that *via media* for which some contend, and which as the experience of the last few eventful years has proved, too often leads, like the old *Via Appia*, into the main street of Rome. The true churchman will indeed condemn and avoid all things which seem to be contrary to God's Word, and those standards which he has sincerely adopted, but then he will make a great difference between the corruptions of Rome and backslidings of some protestants. The false doctrines and idolatrous worship and evil practices of Rome are established by her highest authority, are universally adopted, are gloried in, are required to be received of all in order to salvation. The apostacies of protestants are those of individuals and parties who have deviated from the acknowledged standards of their churches, and are very few by comparison with those of Rome. Such are the Socinians, the Unitarians and Neologists of Europe and America who have departed from the faith of their protestant fathers, and some of whom have troubled Episcopal churches from the days of Arius to the present moment. Let us be thankful that under God our articles and prayers and apostolic form of government have contributed much to keep us more sound in the faith than some who have not enjoyed the same advantages, and let us adhere to them most steadily and zealously on that account. And now if it be said, seeing there is such great difference between the errors of Rome and of some protestant churches, may we not while refusing all fellowship with the one, indulge in the freest and fullest intercourse with the other; we answer, it requires but little experience to satisfy a sound-minded person that the communion and amalgamation which some good people think so very desirable, and for which some designing ones argue, as may suit their purpose, is utterly impracticable without producing worse evils than those sought to be avoided. This is true of all the various divisions of the christian world, but especially so, in relation to our church, differing as it does so much from others, as to its ministry and worship. The wise and candid of all denominations see and feel that common churches, mixed services and partnership concerns fail of their object, or at any rate can only be justified in some infant state of religious society, and as exceptions to a general

rule. But it may be asked, whether beside that christian intercourse which the truly pious of every name should be always ready to hold as individuals and neighbors, there are not some objects and occasions which may unite not only the hearts but the hands of protestants in promoting the truth as it is in Jesus, as was the case with our forefathers, and thereby prove to Romanists and infidels that we are agreed on the great essentials of the christian faith, and are earnestly desirous for the extension of the redeemer's kingdom? The false assertion of Rome that protestants were all in utter confusion among themselves was disproved by the fact that they agreed together, as we have said, in publishing and circulating the bible, and many other books setting forth the great undisputed truths of the bible, and subsequently presenting in one volume all their confessions, thereby showing a wonderful agreement on main points. And are there no such institutions in our day, having the same objects in view, in which all protestants may unite without any sacrifice of principle? What shall we say of those noble institutions of England and America which are distributing in almost every tongue, millions of the sacred scriptures, in which of course all denominations believe they are disseminating their own views of divine truth without any abatement? And may we not add to these, at least two great associations of our land in which for so many years christians of the leading denominations have so harmoniously and effectively combined; our own church having ever been fully and ably represented therein? Who does not rejoice to think of the circulation by them of millions of excellent books, tracts, catechisms and hymns, suitable for every age and class, and from which nothing is omitted which any but Romanists would consider essential to salvation? We cannot but regard these institutions as raised up by Providence as for other reasons so especially for uniting protestants in one common effort against the assaults of Rome in these latter days, when the battle of the Reformation is again to be fought, and by no church more vigorously than our own. A more effective antidote to the poison which she would insinuate into all ranks of our citizens cannot well be conceived, than is to be found in those almost innumerable publications which are carried as by the winds of heaven into every nook and corner of our land. If it be pleaded that some things which different denominations deem important must be left out of these publications, we reply, let such things be set forth as they already are, and ever will be, by other societies. Denomi-

national zeal will always do this. And if any either from conscientious scruples, or other cause, choose to devote their efforts and means entirely to these latter institutions, they of course have full liberty so to do, but let not such upbraid with false-heartedness to their own church, any who differ from them. For one, I shall not let my liberty be judged of in such matters by other men's conscience or judgment. Nor with such examples as I have quoted, and those which in every period since the Reformation might be adduced, do I feel that I am the less sincere and true in my loyalty to the church of my fathers and of my choice. And I humbly conceive that as the citizens of our country show their patriotism and attachment to the constitution by a becoming respect to the well known sentiments and conduct of the heroes and statesmen who secured our liberties and founded our government, so may we show our churchmanship, as protestants, by a filial though not superstitious regard to the sentiments, and a respectful though not slavish following after the example of the reformers and fathers of our church.

CONCLUSION.

In drawing these remarks to a close let me now sum up in a few words the impression which prevails in my mind as to the character of a true churchman in our branch of the christian church.

1st. He is one who is sincerely attached to the doctrines thereof, as seen in the prayer book, and confirmed by the contemporaneous writings of those who drew up the prayer book in England, or revised it in America; not as interpreted by the fathers or what is called catholic consent. Nevertheless according to the prayer book he acknowledges the bible as the only divine rule of faith, and esteems the doctrines of the church because he believes them to be according to that divine rule.

2dly. He loves the liturgy of the church because he believes it to be according to the doctrines of the bible and prayer book. As to her worship, he seeks to enter into its deep spirit of devotion, without which all his admiration and praise of it will be of no avail. If he be a minister, he will read it as one who feels its truth, and will seek to induce his congregation to unite audibly and heartily with him. If a parent, he will not only open his mouth and utter it as one not ashamed of it, but seek to lead his children and others to

do the same. 3dly. As to the ministry and government of the church, he will show his belief of its apostolic appointment and many excellences, by obeying, according to his station, those who are over him in the Lord. He will honor each order of that ministry which he believes to have come down from the apostles, according to its office and the authority given to it, not wishing to elevate or depress either of them. 4th. As to those divisions of christendom which have, whether through unavoidable necessity or mistaken judgment, deviated from what he conceives to be the apostolic regimen, he will seek to judge of them and act towards them as God sets the example and our forefathers followed. He will see that God chose to use them as he did the reformers of our mother church, for restoring true faith and piety when they were almost vanished from among men, and that to the present day, he still continues to use them for the purpose of promoting his cause upon earth. While therefore he laments what he regards as a defect, through which great evils have entered their communion, he dares not reject from the church of Christ those whom Christ hath thus honored, but as he hopes to meet with them and be ever with them in his presence hereafter, so he delights to walk with them in love here below, and co-operate in all good works, so far as can be done without the sacrificing of conscience, and the engendering of discord and confusion. As a man may be a patriot and a philanthropist at the same time, may love his own country especially, and yet love the whole human race, so the churchman may love above all other his own particular church and seek its prosperity more diligently, and yet love all the people of God, by whatever name they be called. Thus while especially devoted to his own church, and even to some portion of the same, it may be truly said of him,

"To sect or party his large soul
"Disdains to be confined,
"The good he loves of every name
"And prays for all mankind."

His charity only begins at home; it knows no bounds but those set by God himself for his own benevolence.

"God loves from whole to parts, but human soul
"From individual to the whole."

I confess, my brethren, that I have always loved our own and mother church for this, as for many other reasons, that I think in her whole history, from the Reformation to the

present day, there has been a due admixture of this liberal feeling towards others with a most ardent attachment to her own peculiarities. If in either of them there has been, whether in public acts or private opinions, any thing to the contrary, nor is this denied, it is believed that the great body of her members has not partaken of it. The high station they have occupied, and the intelligence belonging to them, have doubtless contributed not a little to such liberality, but the spirit breathing through all her devotions, and the character and example of her early reformers and martyrs, and the compilers of her prayer book have contributed much more. In her whole history there is much to interest, though not without that which we must all lament and condemn. Let the history of the English church be stricken from the annals of christendom, let the memoirs of many of her bishops, other ministers and eminent laymen be consigned to oblivion, let all the volumes of sermons, theological treatises and devotional works be dismissed from the libraries of the divines of every denomination, and what a melancholy blank would be created. And may I not add, that if the history of her youthful daughter in America, as seen in the early efforts for her first establishment on the part of English friends, in the difficulties encountered in our own country, in the character of many of her leading advocates both among the clergy and laity, and in the success which, through God's blessing, has crowned their labors be considered, we have much to interest our minds and much to endear her to our hearts. And may I not further add, that as there is a church of England and America which we are allowed to love above all other great divisions of the church of Christ upon earth, so there is to us, my brethren and friends, a church in Virginia which we may love and care for with a yet more special affection. Is there nothing peculiarly interesting in her history to justify the historiographer of the church in the United States to choose it for his first effort? Is there nothing in her earliest history to excite even a romantic interest in her behalf, though there be much to mourn over in the progress thereof? Is there nothing to the same end in her struggles for existence itself at the close of the revolution, when thousands were crying out "down with her, down with her, even to the ground?" Is there nothing to sustain our faith and excite our gratitude to God, in the most unexpected resuscitation of her from a state of apparent death? Is there nothing to endear her to the heart in the repaired temples, and even in the yet remaining ruins of

some of the old temples of our fathers? Is there nothing to commend her to our choice in the character of those individuals and families who in times of desertion still adhered to her fallen fortunes, and whose descendants now constitute the great body of her communion? Is there nothing in our well attended conventions and the affection which has ever bound our hearts together on such occasions to make us love the church in this diocese? Is there nothing to commend it to our affection and confidence in that seminary which has not only supplied our own state with so many faithful ministers, but whose hundreds of alumni are to be seen in all parts of our own land, and yet more, who form so large a proportion, almost indeed the entire band, of those devoted missionaries who, in Europe, Asia and Africa, are seeking to spread the glorious gospel through the world?

Is it weakness, my friends, to love such a church, and speak of it sometimes even to boasting? Not, if at the same time we mourn over our unworthiness as members thereof, and do not withhold the candid acknowledgment of much error and sin pervading our portion, as well as all other portions of Zion. But with such a feeling and confession we may, and I trust all of us will, as to our church in its wide extension through the earth, and in her special location in our midst, take up the language of one of our sweet hymns.

"Beyond my highest joys
"I prize her heavenly ways,
"Her sweet communion, solemn vows,
"Her hymns of love and praise.
"If e'er my heart forget
"Her welfare or her woe,
"Let every joy this heart forsake
"And every grief o'erflow.
"For her my tears shall fall,
"For her my prayers ascend,
"To her my cares and toils be given,
"'Till toils and cares shall end."

FINIS.